



# CITY OF MARICOPA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Operations

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Steve Stahl, *Chief of Police*

04/24/2017

Vehicle Pursuits

## 1. PURPOSE

This order outlines the responsibilities and guidelines for Maricopa Police Department (MPD) personnel with respect to vehicle pursuits.

## 2. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A pursuit may be initiated when an officer reasonably determines the apprehension of a suspect is **immediately** necessary because the suspect poses an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to human life. [41.2.2a]
  - The danger created by the fleeing vehicle does not justify the need for immediate apprehension of the suspect.
  - If law enforcement operations create the exigent circumstance a pursuit shall not be authorized, absent justifiable circumstances.
- Units authorized to participate in the pursuit are the Primary Police Unit, Secondary Police Unit and Functional Supervisor. Additional units may be authorized by a sworn supervisor.
  - When operating as a two officer unit, both officers are responsible for maintaining compliance with this policy.
- Other police units will remain alert to the progress and location of the pursuit and may participate in a Support Unit role but shall not become actively engaged unless directed by a sworn supervisor.
- Emergency lights and sirens shall be used while engaged in a pursuit. Units shall not use emergency lights only.
- Non-routine Driving is authorized for the Functional Supervisor to properly monitor and direct the pursuit.
- Consideration for the number of officers required for the pursuit is determined by an ongoing situational threat assessment made by the pursuing officer or functional supervisor.
- Attempt to maintain quality communications between pursuing unit(s), dispatcher and functional supervisor.
- Consider terminating the pursuit when the Air Unit has assumed the role of Primary Police Unit.
- Ramming is authorized under conditions which justify the use of deadly force.
- Reports by all involved in the pursuit shall be completed and approved by a supervisor prior to going off duty.
- Adhere to Use of Force policy for pursuits, [OPS 1.61](#).

## 3. PURSUIT RESTRICTIONS [41.2.2d]

- A pursuit **SHALL NOT** be initiated or participated in:
  - If the offense is a civil traffic violation, stolen vehicle only, misdemeanors, or non-violent, non-life threatening felonies.



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- When a prisoner or any other citizen is a passenger in the police vehicle including a Police Explorer, Police Volunteer, or citizen ride-a-long.
- When traveling on the wrong side of any roadway, freeway access ramp or frontage road of a divided highway or one-way street. (Unless directed by an involved sworn supervisor)
- During a pursuit, officers **SHALL NOT** (unless directed by a sworn supervisor):
  - Pass the Primary Police Unit, unless requested by the Primary Police Unit.
  - Attempt to overtake the fleeing vehicle.
  - Engage in rolling or stationary road blocks.
- **DO NOT** become involved in a pursuit for any reason while off duty and traveling in a privately owned vehicle.

#### 4. NON-AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY VEHICLES

- Officers operating Non-Authorized Emergency Vehicles and police motorcycles shall request an Authorized Emergency Vehicle response when initiating a pursuit.
- The Non-Authorized Emergency Vehicle may continue as a Secondary Police Unit only until another Authorized Emergency Vehicle assumes the Secondary Police Unit Role. At that time the Non-Authorized Emergency Vehicle shall immediately disengage from the pursuit.
- Only pursuit-rated K-9 vehicles may engage in a pursuit.

#### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

##### Primary Police Unit [41.2.2b]

- Immediately activate emergency lights and siren, when initiating a pursuit.
- Notify Communications of the pursuit, and broadcast, "**Unit Identifier, in pursuit.**"
- Provide the following information:
  - Reason for the pursuit.
  - Location, direction and speed of the pursuit.
  - Traffic conditions.
  - Description of the suspect vehicle.
  - Description and number of occupants.
  - Description of hazards or unusual occurrences.
- If Primary Unit is a two officer unit, the passenger shall take over radio communications.



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## **Secondary Police Unit** [41.2.2c]

- Assist the Primary Police Unit by:
  - Notifying Communications of Secondary Police Unit role.
  - Continually updating information on progress of pursuit.
  - If Secondary Unit is a two officer unit, the passenger shall take over radio communications.
- Maintain Secondary Police Unit role unless requested to assume the Primary Police Unit role.

## **Functional Supervisor** [41.2.6f]

- Acknowledge and actively supervise the pursuit.
- Monitor incoming information.
- Respond to the area and refrain from becoming the Primary or Secondary Police Unit.
- Coordinate and direct pursuit activities. Options include, but are not limited to:
  - Directing specific units in and out of the pursuit.
  - Reassigning Primary and Secondary Police Units.
  - Requesting Air Unit.
  - Terminating the pursuit when circumstances warrant.
  - Utilizing Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT).
  - Utilizing Stop Sticks.
- Ensure there is no caravanning by monitoring radio traffic, communications with Air Unit, and/or personal observations.

## **Support Units**

- May parallel the pursuit while maintaining routine driving.
- Stay off the radio unless necessary.
- Be available if pursuit terminates and back-up is required.
- **DO NOT engage in non-routine driving to become involved in the pursuit.**

## **Dispatcher Responsibilities** [41.2.2e]

- Notify units of the pursuit on the appropriate frequencies.
- Notify the responsible supervisor to the location of the pursuit.
- Allow units to communicate car to car when necessary.
- Notify neighboring jurisdictions when the pursuit approaches its boundaries.



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## 6. TERMINATION OF PURSUIT [41.2.2g]

- A pursuit may be terminated by any of the following personnel:
  - Units engaged in the pursuit.
  - Functional supervisor.
  - Ranking sworn Department member.
- Terminate a pursuit when:
  - The danger to the public outweighs the need to apprehend the suspect.
  - Failure of police vehicle's emergency or mechanical equipment.
  - Visual contact is lost for a reasonable period of time.
  - Ordered by a supervisor.
- How to terminate a pursuit:
  - Turn off emergency lights and siren.
  - Cease non-routine driving.
  - Terminate any attempts to follow the suspect vehicle.
  - Broadcast termination of pursuit or acknowledge the order to terminate the pursuit by broadcasting, "Unit Identifier, terminating pursuit."
  - Return to service.

## 7. POST PURSUIT REPORTING

- The functional supervisor is responsible for the following:
  - Notify Duty Lieutenant, who notifies the Commander.
  - Duty Supervisor will complete Vehicle Pursuit Blue Team entry within 7 days and submit to the lieutenant for review.
  - Ensure the Primary Patrol Unit's immediate supervisor is notified before the end of shift in person, by phone, by email or by voicemail.
  - Ensure proper DR reporting of pursuit by all involved members.
- Refer to [Policy 5.18](#) for further post reporting procedures.

## 8. OTHER AGENCY PURSUITS [41.2.6h]

- **DO NOT** engage in other agency pursuit that enters the City of Maricopa unless it meets Maricopa Police Department pursuit policy guidelines.
- Maricopa units:
  - May act as Support Units.
  - Shall not leave the City of Maricopa without supervisor approval.



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## 9. ROADBLOCKS AND FORCIBLE STOPPING

**Approved Tactics (If Trained)** – All intervention tactics short of deadly force such as the following should be used when it is possible to do so in safety and when the officers utilizing them have received appropriate training for their use and with supervisor approval. [41.2.3]

- Tire deflation devices
- Bulls Eye techniques
- Paralleling
- Traffic control
- Surveillance
- Air support/drone

### Portable Disabling Devices

- The use of tire deflation devices is an effective way to conclude and/or avoid pursuits, while minimizing danger to the public and the officers involved.
  - Tire deflation devices may also be deployed during barricade/static situations as a method of disabling a vehicle
  - Tire deflation devices will not be deployed on moving vehicles that do not meet the criteria for pursuing
- Officers will ensure that their tire deflation devices are serviceable and ready for use at the start of each shift.
- **Approval for Deployment** - The use of tire deflation devices is one of many factors to be considered when determining whether to terminate or to continue a vehicle pursuit. This policy is not meant to supersede the decision by an involved officer or supervisor to terminate a pursuit prior to use of tire deflation devices.
  - Deployment of tire deflation devices requires the approval of a Maricopa Police Department sworn supervisor
  - Only officers who have received department-approved training in the use of tire deflation devices are authorized to deploy them.
  - When other law enforcement agencies involved in a pursuit enter Maricopa, deployment of tire deflation devices will only be used when a Maricopa unit has taken over as the primary unit because of potential damage to police cars and the difficulty in communicating with outside agencies.
- **Deployment Guidelines**
  - When possible, officers involved in a pursuit will be advised that “Stop Sticks” are being deployed and the location where they will be used.
  - Officers involved in the pursuit should allow ample room between the suspect vehicle and their police vehicles to avoid damage to department vehicles and injury to the officer.



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- Tire deflation devices will not be deployed when it is clear that their use creates a danger to the public and/or employee that outweighs the benefit of its use.
- Documentation - Damage will be documented in an incident report, along with photographs of the damage.
- Boxing In - With a supervisor's authorization, sworn employees may box in a stationary vehicle or utilize tire deflating devices to prevent the vehicle from becoming mobile. (Tire deflation devices will not be deployed on moving vehicles that do not meet the criteria for pursuing).
- A written report with an administrative review following the format of a pursuit will be conducted following any of the above methods of forcible stopping.

## 10. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR VEHICLE RELATED INCIDENTS

### Pursuit

- A formal review will be made of all pursuits initiated by an officer or in which an officer was involved (driver and passenger). The on-duty supervisor will:
  - Complete the initial fact finding stages of the investigation, including a Blue Team pursuit entry. If it is immediately determined that the pursuit could be out of policy and there are injuries or property damage, the on-call lieutenant or Chief should be notified immediately. The notified command officer may request an IA investigator or assign a supervisor to begin a misconduct investigation.
    - Absent immediate intervention by the command officer, no misconduct investigation will be initiated until after the review of the pursuit.
  - Ensure that involved officers complete Spillman supplements regarding their actions in reference to the pursuit.
  - The on-duty or the employee's immediate supervisor will be responsible for completing a Blue Team pursuit report.
- The Blue Team report will include the following documentation:
  - Supervisor's Summary.
  - Spillman report.
  - Any accident reports either directly or indirectly resulting from the pursuit.
  - Related criminal reports
  - Witness Statements - When possible, tape-record or video record all witness statements.
  - Map - If applicable, a map of the area traveled during the pursuit.
  - Photographs - (e.g., photographs of vehicles, damage, suspect, etc.)
  - Audio Recording – Radio traffic and taped witness statements.
  - Body worn camera footage.



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- The Blue Team pursuit report will be forwarded to the chain of command within 10 calendar days.

## Police Vehicle Accidents and/or Damage

- See [OPS 5.12 Traffic Collisions – Department Vehicles](#)

## Employee Driving Incident or Photo-Technology Citation Investigations

- All allegations of improper driving by police employees operating a city-owned, leased, or seized vehicle will be reported to the employee's supervisor who will ensure that a proper investigation is completed. All photo-technology citations issued to department employees driving city-owned, leased, or seized vehicle will be forwarded to the employee's supervisor

## **11. GRIEVANCES AND MERIT BOARD**

- Personnel Rule 2.3.1 Right to Grievances and Appeals defines a grievance as follows, "Merit employees shall have the right to file a grievance if the employee feels that their rights, benefits, or privileges have been violated or discriminated against in any way. Any merit employee shall have the right to appeal any grievance response, termination, reprimand, demotion, or suspension except under circumstances where appeal is specifically prohibited under these policies and procedures." All grievances must be submitted in writing to the supervisor or the Human Resources manager within ten (10) business days of the incident in question. See Human Resources for guidance in filing a grievance. [25.1.1]